

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/977,897
Response and Amendment dated March 24, 2004
Reply to Office Action dated January 28, 2004

REMARKS

The Examiner has allowed Claims 1 and 5-7 and has provided an Examiner's amendment of Claim 1. The Applicants are in agreement with the Examiner's amendment as set forth in the Office Action mailed January 28, 2004. The Applicants have amended Claim 1 as suggested by the Examiner, and have formally canceled Claims 2-4 and 8-45 without prejudice, and Applicants reserve the right to file divisional applications at a later date claiming the benefit of priority to U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/977,897 filed October 15, 2001 and to U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/297,645 filed June 12, 2001 concerning non-elected Claims 2-4 and 8-45. Applicants believe that this Application is in form for a notice of allowance and request such action at an early date.

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CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that Applicants' Application as amended, and the remarks set forth in this paper are responsive to the Office Action mailed January 28, 2004.

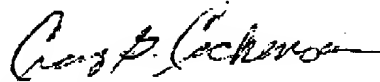
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AUTHORIZATION

Applicants believe that no further government fees are due for the amendments made to this Application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any necessary additional fees associated with this paper to Deposit Account No. 02-4553. A duplicate copy of this Response and Amendment is enclosed for deposit account purposes.

Respectfully submitted,



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